REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1 and 8 have been

amended and Claims 9-21 have been added to more clearly define the claimed invention. No

new matter is believed or intended to be added to the present application by this amendment.

Reconsideration and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested in view of the following

remarks.

Specification Objections

The Examiner objected to an informality on page 2, line 7. The listed informality and a

editorial error discovered in the specification have been corrected by this amendment.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected Claims 4 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being

indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the

Applicant regards as the invention. Claim 8 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Claim 4 was rejected for use of the term "electronic volume", which the Examiner stated is not

clearly explained or distinctly defined in the claim. However, "electronic volume" is a common

term of art used in many prior art documents—for example, see element 3 of U.S. Patent No.

5,317,558 to Yagami et al.—and therefore the meaning of "electronic volume" is apparent from

the prior art, as required by MPEP 2173.05(a). Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to

withdraw the rejection of Claims 4 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,939,938, issued August 17, 1999 to Arthur Joseph Kalb et al. (hereafter referenced as '938) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,834,977, issued November 10, 1998 to Eiju Maehara et al. (hereafter referenced as '977). The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

For example, Claim 1 comprises a detection means that detects a differential voltage between outputs from two power amplifiers. The Examiner maintains that the comparator 14a shown in '977 suggests the claimed detection means, but the Applicant respectfully disagrees. For example, the comparator 14a determines the difference between a voltage V_a (at point A in Fig. 3) and a reference voltage V_{ref}. (column 6, lines 18-31). Thus, the comparator 14a does not determine a differential voltage between outputs of amplifiers 15A and 15B as the Examiner maintains.

Additionally, assuming *arguendo* that the voltage $+V_{cc}$ supplied in '977 constitutes an input signal supplied to the power amplifiers, the $+V_{cc}$ in '977 is not muted, as claimed in Claim 1. Instead, the voltage $+V_{cc}$ is supplied to the amplifiers 15A and 15B via line 13, regardless of whether or not the switch SWIZ is open or closed.

Claims 2 and 4-8 each depend upon Claim 1 and thus are patentable for the reasons set forth above based on this dependency as well as the recitations set forth therein. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections of Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103.
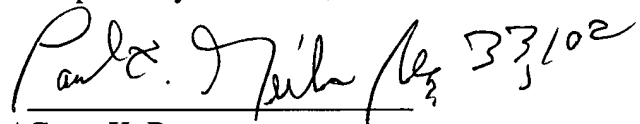
Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed

to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is

kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Filed concurrently herewith is an Excess Claim Fee Payment Letter (with required fee)

for one excess total claim fee.

Also filed concurrently herewith is a Petition (with fee) for an Extension of Time of Two

Months. The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue

Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any

overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

Grant K. Rowan
Registration No. 41,278

WASHINGTON OFFICE
23373
CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: September 10, 2003